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FRIEZE FROM THE TOMB OF SIDRACH DE LALAING AT SAINT-OMER.

REPRODUCED FROM "LA RENAISSANCE EN FRANCE."

BIBLIOGRAPHY.

ARCHITECTURE.

LA RENAISSANCE EN FRANCE. Par LÉON PALUSTRE. Dessins et Gravures sous la Direction de Eugène Sadoux. Paris: A. Quantin. 1879-1880. (New York: J. W. Bouton.) Folio.

IT will be found that architects' libraries are chiefly composed of French works, so greatly do the latter predominate both in number and value over the contributions of other nations. This is a striking fact in view of the active interest which several of these nations take in architecture, and it is emphasized on remarking that even in England and Germany a bookseller, after showing a few native publications, directs the attention of his customer to the shelf of French books as his chief stock in trade. It is especially curious in the case of England, whose art is essentially literary in its tendencies, and where to-day there is perhaps the greatest popular interest in architecture, that so few fine works upon this subject are published.

This state of affairs may be attributed to various causes, one of which evidently is the spread of cheap illustrated journals. In England and Germany at least the market for costly publications has been ruined by them. Neither architects nor the public, it appears, will buy expensive works, when for a few cents they can have weekly journals with plates which are practically as useful as the finest engravings or etchings from which they are reproduced. The counterparts of these cheap publications do not as yet flourish in France, for the *Encyclopédie* and *Moniteur* belong to a much higher and more costly grade. The aim of French architects being to refine or develop certain recognized styles and types, rather than, like their English brethren, to discover novel and picturesque effects and details, they have a higher appreciation of standard works, and there is a more constant demand for them. The influence, too, of a "paternal government" must not be overlooked, for whereas in England institutions and public libraries expect a copy of a new publication for a gift, the French publisher can count upon the sale of a

certain number of copies to the government libraries scattered throughout the country, which amounts virtually to a subscription fund.

That the confidence of French publishers to successfully produce costly works is unshaken, is proved by the initial numbers of a fine and comprehensive work upon Monuments of the Renaissance in France. The subject is by no means a new one. Adolphe Berty's *La Renaissance Monumentale en France*, one of the most charming architectural works ever published, was edited with judgment, and admirably illustrated. This and Sauvageot's important work on palatial and domestic buildings of that period, besides minor volumes, cover so much of the same ground that a new publication would seem more properly directed towards the ecclesiastical monuments of the style, for these have never received any special attention. The publishers of *La Renaissance en France*, however, have a more ambitious programme. They propose to collect from all parts of France examples of the Renaissance, to be presented with a picturesque aspect interesting to amateurs, yet with such accuracy that they shall be useful data to architects and archæologists. Judging from the opening numbers, this result has been most happily achieved. Nothing can be imagined more poetically conceived nor more picturesquely rendered than these etchings by Monsieur Eugène Sadoux and his assistants, and at the same time no photographs could give more minute and accurate details of line and form. The etcher has skilfully enveloped his precision of rendering in a delicious atmosphere, and thus disguised the presence of those details which would be dry and uninteresting to the unprofessional-reader.

The work is projected in thirty parts, one of which is promised every two months. It is curious to note that the thirtieth number is to be devoted to Lorraine and Alsace! Of the five numbers which have appeared, the first treats of the old provinces of Flandre, Artois, and Picardie. It showed no lack of confidence in the undertaking to thus take up in the initial number a tract of country little visited by travellers, and which, unlike many portions of France equally ignored, has really no special claims to interest.

Yet one would never suspect this from the text of Monsieur Palustre, who writes with a true archæologist's enthusiasm of the few small Renaissance monuments of these provinces, and these are etched with a no less loving hand, so that the scant material is made the most of. The next four numbers illustrate a richer province, the Ile-de-France. But it is not until such provinces as Normandy or Tournaine are taken up that the best treasures of the early Renaissance will be reached. Here will be found the glories of the François I. architecture. During this reign architects reared amid Gothic principles and fired by the revelations of classic art created a style as graceful and refined as it was supple and logical; but when this generation passed away, the French Renaissance fell under fatal Italian influences, from which it has not yet freed itself. To us this François I. style has a peculiar interest. Quaint and attractive as is our colonial architecture, and legitimate as is our effort to revive it, it has not a vitality capable of much development, and it would be wise to reinforce its diluted current from a source which—even if it was not the direct origin of our own style—has nevertheless in its wealth of beauty much which we could assimilate; and this we can do the more easily, because many characteristics are common to both,—notably the use of pilasters and mouldings of a refinement and delicacy which we seek in vain in our English prototypes. Our colonial builders happily and strangely enough drifted back to the spirit of the earliest Renaissance in France, and the book under notice is admirably adapted to help our own studies in the same direction.

ARTHUR ROTCH.

THE STATISTICS OF ART.

THE YEAR'S ART. 1881. *A Concise Epitome of all Matters relating to the Arts of Painting, Sculpture, and Architecture which have occurred during the Year 1880 in the United Kingdom, together with Information respecting the Events of the Year 1881.* Compiled by MARCUS B. HUISE, LL.B. London: Macmillan & Co. 1881. xxiv + 248 pp. 12mo.



HIS volume is in many respects an improvement on its predecessor, of which the most glaring defect—pointed out in these columns at the time—was the absence of a Table of Contents.

The table in the present volume shows at once the variety of the information it conveys on State Aid to Art, The National Museums in London, Art Galleries and Exhibitions in London, Provincial Exhibitions, Museums and Exhibitions in Scotland and in Ireland, Science and Art Department, Schools of Art and Art Schools, Architecture, Societies, Clubs, Art Unions, Art Charities, Bequests, Art Sales, Engravings and Etchings published during the Year, Art Books published during the Year, Copyright, Legal Decisions affecting Art, Obituary, List of Dealers, and Directory of the Artists. There is also an "Artists' Calendar," in which are noted the events most likely to interest artists, such as the days for sending in pictures, opening of exhibitions, etc. The information is confined absolutely to the affairs of the United Kingdom, and the period embraced ends with the 1st of December, 1880. The general title of the book, *The Year's Art*, 1881, is therefore rather misleading.

Among the items of general interest the foremost are again those which treat of state aid to art, and of art educational matters. From the statement given on page 1, it appears that the sums voted by Parliament to "Science and Art" increase steadily from year to year; for while £464,430 were voted for 1878-79, £489,563 were set apart for 1879-80, and £501,377 for 1880-81, showing an increase of £11,814, or about \$59,000 over last year. Curiously enough, however, the sums for the two preceding years do not tally with those given in Mr. Huish's first volume, even if we leave out the expenses of the Paris Exhibition, which the previous statement included. An explanation of the cause of this discrepancy would have strengthened the faith of the reader in the accuracy of the other data given throughout the volume. Artists will find matter for reflection in the reports of auction sales, from which it appears that, of the pictures by deceased English artists brought to the hammer during the year, 46 sold for over £200 each, the highest prices paid being £2,058 for *The Slave Market, Cairo*, by W. Müller, and £2,142 for *The Chat round the Brasero*, by John Philip. Of pictures by living English artists, sold at auction during the same period, 59 brought over £200,—among them six which brought over £1,000, the highest sum paid being £1,785 for J. C. Hook's *Gold of the Sea*. The admirers of Mr. Ruskin will be pleased to learn that four "Ruskin Societies" (Societies of the Rose) are now in operation in Manchester, Glasgow, London, and Aberdeen, whose object it is "to increase their own knowledge of Mr. Ruskin's doctrines, and to co-operate in an endeavor to win for them a wider and more accurate acquaintance."

The *Year's Art* is again recommended to travellers of artistic tendencies, and it will also be an indispensable aid to those American artists who, in compliance with the advice lately volunteered from various quarters, may be desirous of exhibiting in England.

S. R. KOEHLER.

ARCHÆOLOGY.

MYTHOLOGIE DER GRIECHEN UND RÖMER, *unter steter Hinweisung auf die Künstlerische Darstellung der Gottheiten als Leitfaden für den Schul- und Selbstunterricht bearbeitet von* DR. O. SEEMANN. Zweite, verb. und verm. Auflage, mit 79. Holzschnitt-Illustrationen. Leipzig: Verlag von E. A. Seemann. 1880. 264 pp. 12mo.



HIS is a considerably improved edition of a useful school-book. It differs from the first edition mainly in having a larger number of illustrations, several of which represent objects found in the recent excavations at Olympia and Pergamon. The work contains the material of an ordinary small dictionary of mythology arranged in convenient order. A brief Introduction dealing with the content of Greek and Roman Mythology, and general conceptions of the nature of the Gods, shows that the work is written from the standpoint of the sun-myth school, which contains a needle of truth in a haystack of error. To say that an oak had its origin in an acorn and a clod would not usually be regarded as a sufficient explanation of it. Yet this is exactly similar to the explanation which the dawn-mythists give of the polytheistic systems of the Greeks and Romans. The whole